

Carousel Players

... THEATRE YOU NEVER OUTGROW ...



2020 - 2021
Annual Report

Carousel Players' 2020 - 2021 Season was an extraordinary year. As the Covid-19 pandemic spread across the world and caused so much damage to people and societies, Carousel Players' Board and staff remained committed to creativity, children, and community. Some highlights of the Season:

In a year when we were barred from doing our core work, performing in schools, Carousel staff and artists created two plays that engaged and inspired audiences.

Although the Niagara Region spent a third of the season living under strict stay-at-home orders, staff created community connection in unexpected and charming ways.

With use of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and youth employment grants, we created employment for seven arts workers and arts educators on contracts ranging from three to eleven months.

The Arts Education department developed a new virtual education program that reached thousands of students across the province.

We found opportunities to foster new artistic work in the midst of extreme uncertainty and paid fees to forty-eight artists.

Our work was interrupted and redirected multiple times this season. A sizable percentage of the work done by staff this season had to be discarded or postponed in response to public health guidelines.

This annual report is not a typical review of the year's activities. Instead, it will take you through Carousel Players' topsy-turvy year and show you just how creative, committed and talented the company's Board, artists, and staff are.

About Carousel Players

Carousel Players is an award-winning professional theatre for young audiences committed to the development of new work and the production of theatre that entertains and challenges our audiences. We present inspiring and creative plays for children in schools, theatres, and other venues.

Carousel Players ensures that our performances, summer theatre camps and classroom programs are affordable for all children regardless of their socioeconomic status or situation. We believe live theatre develops artistic awareness, learning skills and a sense of well-being in children.

JULY + AUGUST 2020



Innovative Arts Educators Mike and Nicola launched the Virtual Summer Theatre School for children ages 5-14 on Carousel Players' Zoom platform.

Artistic and Production staff prepared for the season, bringing together creative teams and holding auditions.

Campers attended online sessions each morning and used their personal Surprise Supplies (delivered in Carousel Players' tour truck) to create crafts.



Outreach staff borrowed the idea of Surprise Supplies kits and assembled packages of crafts and games that were distributed through community organizations to families with limited resources. The Niagara Community Foundation supported two more distributions in the winter and spring.

Staff began to go through five decades of photos and documents to assemble a visual history of Carousel Players, identify the 700+ artists who have worked for the company, and prepare for our anniversary season.

In the summer and fall of 2020, Carousel had 12 people on staff thanks to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and youth employment grants. In addition to our five core staff, we were able to hire an Education Coordinator and three educators, a Production Coordinator, and an Outreach Coordinator and an Outreach Assistant. We also mentored a Business Communications Intern from Brock University.



In August, the provincial government released their education plan which barred outside visitors to schools for the 2020-2021 school year. We canceled the school and daycare tours of *Lig & Bittle*, *Pop! Pop!* and *Bluenose*. The arts centres and public presenters of our Spring 2021 tour of *The Incredible Adventures of Mary Jane Mosquito* began canceling their bookings and the tour was finally canceled in late fall as Covid-19 conditions worsened.

SEPTEMBER + OCTOBER 2020

We received funding from the City of St Catharines to create a series of Covid-safe family events that we named *Carousel in the Community*. These events filled in some of the gaps in the 2020-2021 Season's schedule.



On September 26, we hosted our first public event of 2020: the Giant Puppet Party. It was a gorgeous day, but unfortunately we had to turn away participants away because of changes to gathering limits.



Artistic Director Monica Dufault shared the first draft of her new virtual play, *HBD2Me*, and worked with the playwrights *Lig & Bittle* to create an audio play adaptation.



Outreach staff worked with local businesses to create the Downtown Scavenger Hunt of Carousel Players props for the month of Culture Days.

The audio play of *Lig & Bittle* was recorded with the 2019-2020 Season cast.



Educator and Dungeon Master Mike created the D&D Adventures program, which became our most popular online offering!



The magical Halloween Happening was designed by our artistic and production team, with video design by James McCoy and sound scape by Ethan Rising. The free event "sold out" weeks ahead of time!

NOVEMBER + DECEMBER 2020

Carousel Players' first virtual play, *HBD2Me*, was workshopped, rehearsed and recorded entirely online.

The Carousel Caravan was put on hold for a year for everyone's safety. Staff instead created an online auction so our supporters could do their holiday shopping!



FOUR FRIENDS



1 VIRTUAL BIRTHDAY PARTY

HBD2Me

(Happy Birthday to Me)



by
Monica Dufault

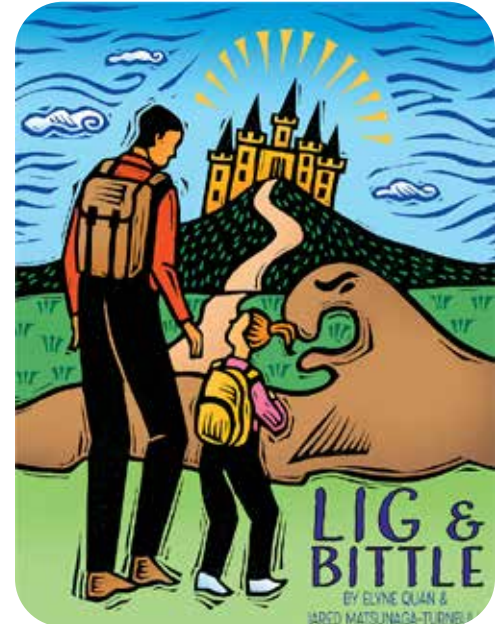
A new workshop was cast and added to the calendar in April: the Clown Play.

A new digital play was cast and added to the calendar in May: *A Yard or Two*.

The cast and creative team of *Pop! Pop!* held a one week creation workshop.

The Education department completed a new teacher's resource: The Drama Playground. This program provides virtual drama lessons for students in grades 1-3.

The audio play of *Lig & Bittle* began "touring" schools.



Designers James McCoy, Roberta Doyle, and production staff created the magical *Winter World* for a month-long installation at the downtown Central Library.



Due to the second lock-down

- The second part of the *Pop! Pop!* process was postponed to March
- The January workshop of *The Velveteen Rabbit* was postponed to April
- The *Winter World* installation was removed twelve days after installation
- Staff reworked the January to June production and outreach calendars with multiple contingencies for different lengths and degrees of restrictions.

JANUARY + FEBRUARY 2021

Carousel's staff began 2021 in a second work-from-home period. This was particularly frustrating as we had been excitedly working towards plans for shows and events.

Production staff began the renovation of the Silver Spire Gym into an Arts Education Centre & Rehearsal Hall, a project made possible with funds from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Outreach staff created an online Donor Appreciation event for our supporters, which included the public debut of *HBD2Me*.

Staff completed Season Planning for 2021-2022, Carousel's 50th Anniversary. The plan was approved by the Board in January

HBD2Me began "touring" schools.

Planning began for in person Summer Theatre School 2021.

Production staff began creating the giant garden elements for *Spring Fling*, a *Carousel in the Community* event planned for April

Staff began bi-weekly meetings to discuss topics in Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Access. An online resource centre was created for staff to access and share EDIA materials.

Three fully enrolled D&D Adventures were rescheduled when the provincial government moved the school break.

MARCH + APRIL 2021

The Drama Playground program launched in March. By the end of the school year, it was being used in over 230 classrooms across Ontario.

Preparations began for the second stage of *Pop! Pop!* development, with rehearsal starting March 29.

At Home Adventures, an online guessing game that engaged our audience and promoted local businesses, was launched on Carousel's social media. It was developed as a replacement for an in person scavenger hunt.

The creative team and filming company for *A Yard or Two* was brought together.

Due to the third lock-down

- *Pop! Pop!* rehearsals were stopped after four days and postponed to 2021-2022
- The design workshop for *The Velveteen Rabbit* was converted to a script work week with readings, and the workshop was postponed to 2021-2022
- The workshop of *The Clown Play* was moved online for shortened days, and an in person workshop was added to 2021-2022
- The rehearsal and filming of *A Yard or Two* was moved to start mid June and end in July.
- The *Spring Fling* + *Sidewalk Stories* outreach events were postponed to 2021-2022

MAY + JUNE 2021

The staff was given the first week of May off with pay as appreciation for their hard work and hopeful attitudes in the face of so many obstacles.

A Yard or Two set, props, costumes and masks preparation continued from staff and designers' homes.

Education staff prepared safety protocols for in person camps.

Niagara College students Madison and Angela began co-op placements in the Education department. Brock University student Grace began a general theatre co-op placement.

Staff created a week by week schedule of the 2021-2022 season for all departments.

Carousel Players was certified as a Living Wage Employer.

The extended stay at home order and legislation around rehearsal conditions made it necessary to cancel the rehearsal and filming of *A Yard or Two* on June 10. This left the 2021-22 Season without any programming for older elementary students. A new digital play and new education programming for the same age group were identified, costed, scheduled, and workshopped by the end of June.

Carousel Players 2020 - 2021 Staff

Monica Dufault - *Artistic Director*

Kate Leathers - *General Manager*

Mallory Daley - *Tour and Outreach Manager*

Whitney Braybrook-Byl - *Associate Production Manager*

Ryan Mahon - *Associate Production Manager*

Sara Allison - *Production Coordinator*

Lindsay Detta - *Arts Educator / Researcher*

Nicola Franco - *Arts Educator / Asst Summer Theatre School Coordinator*

Samantha Marchionda - *Outreach Coordinator*

Mike Metz - *Arts Educator / Summer Theatre School Coordinator*

Elizabeth Pereira - *Arts Education Coordinator*

Marianne Vongboudty - *Community Outreach Organizer*

Tyler Bell - *Communications Intern (Brock University Co-op)*

Anandi Dajka - *General Intern / Youth Committee (DSBN Co-op)*

Grace Labelle-Scott - *General Intern (Brock University Co-op)*

Angela Shortt - *Education Assistant (Niagara College Co-op)*

Madison Wormold - *Education Assistant (Niagara College Co-op)*

2020-2021 BY THE NUMBERS

8 COMMUNITY EVENTS

17 CAMPS & CLASSES

17 DIGITAL SHOW BOOKINGS

243 DRAMA PLAYGROUND BOOKINGS

**7,966 AUDIENCE MEMBERS, STUDENTS
AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS REACHED**

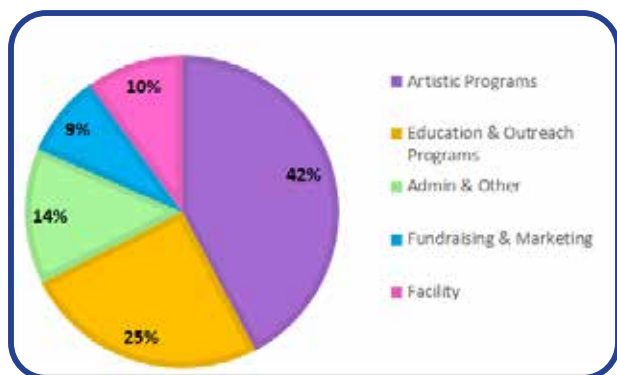
CAROUSEL PLAYERS' 2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Anand, Alexandra del Vecchio, Sande Farrauto, Nadia Ganesh, Lauren Hundert, Wendy Kulp, Nathan MacDonald, Carolyn Mackenzie (Chair), Corey Miles (Treasurer)

ARTISTS OF CAROUSEL PLAYERS 2020 - 2021 SEASON

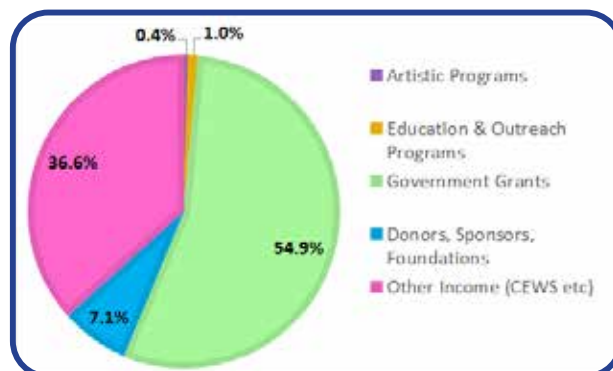
Jamar Adams Thompson, Jocelyn Adema, Jean-Marie Alexandre, Sara Allison, Demi-Lee Bainbridge, Christopher Bautista, Alicia Bender, Jana Bergsma, Taylor Bogaert, Linda Carson, Rose Donoghue, Roberta Doylend, Nicholas Eddie, Emma Ferreira, Rachel Forbes, Nicola Franco, Alexa Fraser, Cameron Grant, Raha Javanfar, Nicole Joy-Fraser, Katia Khan, Joe Lapinski, Lia Luz, Qianna MacGilchrist, Michael Man, Lena Maripuu, Elahe Marjovi, Jared Matsunaga-Turnbull, James McCoy, Kayla McSorley, Monique Mojica, Marilo Nunez, Shane O'Regan, Meryl Ochoa, Alicia Plummer, Elyne Quan, Joe Recinos, Ethan Rising, Carlos Rivera, Nigel Scott, Emmerjade Simms, Nicole Smeija, Reanne Spitzer, Marcel Stewart, Annie Tuma, Kaylyn Valdez-Scott, Kelly Wolf, Ming Wong

2020/21 OPERATING EXPENSES \$585,278



**COMPLETE AUDITED FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST**

2020/21 OPERATING REVENUE: \$683,161



CAROUSEL PLAYERS' WORK IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR FUNDERS, SPONSORS, AND DONORS

2020 CARAVAN SILENT AUCTION DONORS

Alexandra Del Vecchio, Art Gallery of Ontario, Bench Brewing, Bird Kingdom, Carolyn Mackenzie, Cellar Door Wine Tours, CN Tower, Counterpart Brewery, Dina Mavridis, Federica Sikman, Grace Hetherington Cards, Home Depot, Incho, Joe Feta's, Kate Leathers, Laurie Demers, Long & McQuade, Ma Chinese, Mallory Daley, Monica Dufault, Niagara College, Niagara Helicopters, Niagara Parks, Rebecca Cann & Janis Barlow, Safari Niagara, Sara Allison, Shoppers Drug Mart Fourth & Martindale, Silversmith, Soulshine Wellness, Spicy Thai, The Beer Store, The Hare Wine Co, The Lake House, The Printing House, The Water Superstore, Upper Deck, Whitney Braybrook-Byl, Willow Laine, Zehrs

OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS IN 2020-2021 – MANY THANKS!

Glen and Wanda Allison, Emily Alonzo, Jenniffer Anand, Judith Barker, Janis Barlow, David Bartlett, Jerome Black, Garry and Barbara Blain, Rebecca Cann, Robert Christopher, Roberta Doyland, Angela Favell, Caitlin Flannigan-Cox, June & Doug Gibbs, Kendra Hannigan, Kevin Hobbs, Candice Kerling, Melissa Lombardi, Carolyn Mackenzie, Tracy Mackie, Joan McCurdy-Myers, Suzanne Merriam, Stefania Murphy, John Norris, Paddy Parr, Kim Perrins, Manilay Phengphachanh, Gyllian Raby, Erin Rehus, Julie Samson, Nigel Scott, Cindi Stevenson, Diane Taylor, Donna Tredway, Candice Turner-Smith, Marcus Tuttle, Stella Wheeler-Bigford, Brandon Williams, Nancy Vermeer, Darla Zacharchuck

COMMUNITY PARTNER BUSINESSES - SCAVENGER HUNT AND AT HOME ADVENTURES

Beechwood Doughnuts	Itty Bitty Pie Co.	Ruby Red Beautiful
Bolete	Jamrock Irie Jerk	Roly Poly Records
De LaTerre Bakery	Karma Kameleon Pub	St Catharines Museum and
Fine Grind Cafe	Little Chief & Co.	Welland Canals Centre
FirstOntario	Mindbomb Records	St Catharines Public Library
Performing Arts Centre	Mostly Comics	Score Pizza
Foster Festival	Phoenix Rising Games	Soulshine Wellness
Gallery Players	Pocket Change	The Watering Can
Goodwill Niagara	Rise Above Restaurant	Willow Laine

Carousel Players' 2020-2021 Season was supported by

CORE FUNDERS



PROGRAM FUNDERS



TOUR & PROGRAM SUPPORTERS



SCHOOL SHOW DONORS

St David's Lionesses Club
May Court St Catharines